Book Reviews

New Testament Theology
by D. Guthrie
(Downers Grove, USA: InterVarsity, 1981) pp. 1064, $24.95

Donald Guthrie has provided us with an encyclopedic exposition of New Testament thought. He has taken into account the interpretational and exegetical issues associated with almost every text with which he deals. This massive NT theology is in essence a commentary on the New Testament arranged topically. It is also a synthetic presentation of the major and minor topics of NT theology which also takes into account the historical and literary matrix from which and in which they were expressed.

In his 75 page introductory chapter, Guthrie makes his case for his own approach to NT theology. Reacting to recent trends in the method and purpose for doing NT theology, the author proposes to display the overriding unity of NT thought. He further desires to move beyond simply an historical study of what the biblical writers believed. He purposes to theologize, to expound the normative content of NT thought and apply it to today. To achieve these ends, Guthrie organizes his work first of all according to theological theme and secondarily according to New Testament writer. The NT writer serves as a witness to the theme. Guthrie provides helpful summaries periodically to tie together the main points of his exposition. In these ways the unity and the theological message are always to the fore. The diversity of the contribution of a variety of NT writers is kept in the background.

The 900 pages of text on theological themes is divided into ten chapters of fairly equal size. The author's initial chapter on God, His titles, and attributes sometimes reads simply as a catalogue of biblical evidence. The frequent use of cross references to later discussions, unavoidable at the beginning of such a large volume, however, does prevent the reader from sensing that in this first chapter he is dealing with a comprehensive treatment of the subject. The handling of God's attributes, especially His glory, is good. The author, then, moves naturally in his next chapter to consider creation: the world and man. He makes a good case for the reality of creation's spiritual dimension, especially Paul's anthropological terms. His concluding section on sin prepares the way for his next chapters on Christology and Soteriology. A recurrent theme in Guthrie's work first appears in this chapter, the New Testament's positive regard for women.

The next two chapters deal with God's provision of salvation in Christ. The Christology chapter, a two hundred page essay, has some distinctive strengths. After setting out the NT teaching on Christ's humanity, Guthrie presents a masterful exposition of the background and use of the key Christological titles. His analysis of Messiah and Son of Man are most well developed. Guthrie balances this fine presentation with a discussion of Christological hymns and key Christological events: virgin birth, resurrection, and ascension. As the author describes the saving mission of Christ in the next chapter, he places two themes side-by-side: the kingdom and the atoning death.

The benefits of this salvation: the Holy Spirit, the Christian Life, and the Church take up the next three chapters. The author jousts, though not by name, with the pentecostal approach to Acts and Paul. This he does as he provides lucid profiles of the Holy Spirit's work in these writings. After a good description of NT teaching on repentance and faith, Guthrie deals with grace, especially how it relates to apostasy and predestination. His attempts to find apostasy/predestination teaching in every NT writer are not totally successful. He handles well the issues of perfection and the role of law in the Christian life.

As he had to do when he discussed the atoning death of Christ, Guthrie must distinguish between pre-resurrection and post-resurrection thought when he speaks of NT teaching on the church. He makes a good case for seeing Jesus' teaching as containing founding principles for the church which were worked out in the life and thought of the early Christian community. The author has a preference for lack of structure in church polity and this comes out in his analysis. The role of women in the church is again discussed at some length.

The author concludes his work with a thorough discussion on eschatology, ethics and Scripture. Guthrie is amillennial with a penchant for taking the concrete descriptions of heaven, hell, and the future life as symbolic. He argues against pre-millennialism and the pre-tribulation rapture. He presents a good classification and description of the vices and virtues in NT ethical teaching. He summarizes in helpful categories issues in social ethics.

As the crown of his work, Donald Guthrie presents a concluding chapter on the NT teaching about Scripture. He does this only to provide an exposition of an important element of NT thought "But another reason for its inclusion is the role it has to play in deciding the extent to which NT theology can be considered normative. Clearly since the testimony of the NT is backed by an authoritative and inspired text, its teaching must have more than a descriptive function and must form the basis of the doctrinal position of the on-going Christian Church" (p. 982).

The major strengths of Guthrie's work are in the areas of its scope and its emphasis. As already noted, the work is truly comprehensive. It is an invaluable resource for dealing with interpretational problems on every aspect of NT theology. It provides the raw material fabricated into coherent, synthesized form from which contemporary systematic theology should be produced. No more clearly does this contribution come into focus than in his summary statements (e.g. the summary profile of NT teaching on the church, pp. 787-789). Guthrie's perspective is that NT thought is a coherent unit. This means that methodologically, he offers a refreshing alternative to rationalistic analysis which consistently concentrates on the diversity within the text and by-passes any attempts to find coherent unity. He argues for a rehabilitation of harmonization as an appropriate method of analytical inquiry (p. 56). He more than once demonstrates the unity of which he is convinced by tracing aspects of a given theological theme throughout various writers (e.g. Ch. 5 on the Holy Spirit). By skillful interaction with twentieth century non-biblical thought, he establishes the validity of his other conviction: the NT message is valid for today.

There are some weaknesses which also need to be noted. Because of its size and the length of its chapters, the work is not well suited for classroom use. Admittedly the chapters are subdivided by headings. Yet, Guthrie's aim to portray Scripture's unity on given theological themes almost necessitates that one read an entire chapter, often 100 pages, at one sitting in order to get the full effect of his presentation. Of course the summary statements help.

With a work of this size there is bound to be an uneveness of presentation. This does happen, for some parts of NT theology seem less well digested than others. The unevenness shows itself when in some portions Guthrie simply lists the evidence relevant to his given theological theme but doesn't show how the elements fit into a coherent whole (e.g. the evidence for God as king in the Book of Revelation, p. 87).

Two weaknesses in the book's structure are; firstly, no separate treatment of the gospel writer's theology except for John. The Synoptics' material is taken mainly as evidence for Jesus' teaching. Since such a treatment is lacking in the other major evangelical NT theology (G.E. Ladd's), it is a deficiency most to be regretted. Secondly, the NT content in any given chapter is consistently presented in canonical order, save for Johannine literature. This is also a broadly chronological sequence. It would have been more helpful if a stricter chronological scheme had been developed and followed. Then, the influences of historical factors on the diversity of emphasis and approach in NT thought by the various authors could have been taken into account. Often times the reader finds himself asking why one NT writer differs from another and struggling to understand the differ-

ences in historical context, i.e. who preceded whom in time; was there any influence one on the other?

Guthrie admirably seeks to consistently make application of the NT message to today. He presents his hermenuetical bridge as follows: "The environment of modern man is essentially different from that of first-century man, but the same problems arise in relation to God. Since the problems are not environmental as is sometimes supposed, what the NT says about man cannot be considered obsolete" (p. 116). The author battles mainly with the empiricist existential interpretation of the NT. He fails to take into account the new wave of challenge to the NT normativeness. Linguists, sociologists, and anthropologists are arguing for an epistemology in which meaning is environmental in origin. It is derived out of the socio-cultural matrix. In order to maintain the normativeness for the message of an ancient text in a contemporary context, one is going to have to construct his hermeneutical bridge out of a wider range of arguments than simply an appeal to the common spiritual needs of first and twentieth century man.

There are a number of ways Guthrie's work is helpful for doing theology in an African context. He presents a good exposition of NT teaching concerning the spiritual world in his chapter on creation. Although his thrust is to argue for the reality of supernatural forces beyond the material (the African does not need to be convinced of this), in the process he lays out clearly all the relevant NT evidence. In his concluding summary about Christology, Guthrie stresses that his presentation has involved the description of the teaching about Christ in a form that precedes its expression in Greek terms of the orthodox creeds from the fourth and fifth century. As an African wrestles with Biblical teaching directly in Guthrie, his task of interpreting the truth about Christ and indeed all other Christian truth is greatly simplified. He can move with the aid of this NT theology directly from biblical thought to contextualized African theological thought with a minimum of influence from the intervening western theological thought tradition. Guthrie is also helpful in the area of apostasy/predestination. A study of the NT teaching on the subject will guide the church's leadership in dealing with backsliding in the church. Two areas where he will prove less beneficial are church order, since he is biased against structure, and ancestral spirits, since he is quite vague in his interpretation of Scripture's teaching about the intermediate state.

The evangelical world is especially indebted to Donald Guthrie for sharing with it the mature fruit of many years of reading, thinking and teaching about New Testament thought. Every reader is certainly enriched by careful study of a volume which achieves its goal: a lucid exposition of the normative and unified truth of God found in the New Testament.

W.J. Larkin, Columbia Graduate School of Bible and Missions

Approaches To Old Testament Interpretation
by J. Goldingay
(I.V.P., Leicester, 1981), pp. 191, NP

This is another welcome title in the series: Issues in Contemporary Theology. In his introduction, the author clearly points out that his aim is to survey various ways in which the Old Testament has been interpreted. By reading the book in question, it is hoped that the reader will come to grips with the significance of the Old Testament for the contemporary church. The author points out that the Old Testament belonged to Christianity from the beginning. Thus these Scriptures played a significant role in the faith of Jesus and that of the early Church.

In order to bring his point home, the author attempts to deal with some basic questions. Such issues include the following: the relationship between Old Testament stories and the New Testament teaching; the Old Testament's view of history; the key to interpreting the Old Testament; whether we can use the New Testament to interpret the Old Testament; the implications of the Old Testament to the New Testament believer, etc.

The book itself is divided into five chapters dealing with broad topics, which are divided further into rather more specific subjects.

Chapter one deals with the Old Testament as faith, a subject which is narrowed further into the definitions and materials for Old Testament Theology. In this chapter, Goldingay touches on one of the most sensitive issues in Old Testament Theology, that is finding the centre or grid of Old Testament Theology. He makes the point that there is no consensus among scholars concerning this issue. The author opts for biblical theology rather than either an Old Testament Theology or New Testament Theology. Accordingly, there is a basic unity of outlook between the Old Testament and the New Testament. For example, the Universalism of the New Testament is also found in the Old Testament (cf. Genesis 1-11 which emphasize God as the God of the nations).

Chapter Two deals with the Old Testament as a way of life, in other words, the life of the Old Testament believers is a walk (halakah). The basic issue here concerns the extent to which the Church in the 20th century can apply Old Testament commands to her situation. The solution to this problem, according to the author is to interpret Old Testament passages within their cultural, historical, geographic and theological contexts. A point of emphasis is that the Scriptures are God's revelation to us and thus both the Old Testament ethical commands and the New Testament teachings are binding on the church today. Punishment comes not only through breaking God's

commands, but also in failing to obey them. Thus Jesus reveals the true meaning of the Torah and calls on His disciples to put it into practice.

Chapter Three deals with the Old Testament as the story of salvation. The author challenges the approach of viewing the Old Testament from a narrow perspective. He espouses the view of Von Rad and G.E.Wright that God's acts in history are not the sole theme in Old Testament Theology. For example, the wisdom books, some of the Psalms and the prophetic teaching against Israel and the nations seldom refer to this theme.

On the other hand, Goldingay points out that the wisdom tradition can be integrated into the salvation history approach. Thus wisdom is a way of life issuing from God's acts of grace and judgement in the past.

A concluding note in this chapter is that Old Testament faith is much wider than salvation history. It should be pointed out however that the importance of this theme should not be obscured by the multiplicity of Old Testament faith. The author challenges Von Rad's views and those of others who doubt the reliability of Old Testament narratives (the challenge which the reviewer supports fully).

Chapter Four discusses the issue of the Old Testament as witness to Christ. Specifically, the question of typology is dealt with at length. Typology is described as dealing with the correspondence between Old Testament and New Testament events (which are not mere repetition nor are they identical).

According to Goldingay, typology is an approach to the theology while on the other hand, allegory is an approach to interpretation (i.e. hermeneutical principle). In other words, typology concerns itself with events while allegory is a method of interpreting words. The author's point is well taken that "types are events, persons or institutions, which become symbols of something brought about later which is analogous too, yet more glorious than the original" (p.107). Another point worth noting is that New Testament typology moves from the anti-type to the identification of the type (not vice versa).

Chapter Five deals with the relationship between tradition, revelation and theology. The key issue is that of the Old Testament canon (thus the title "Old Testament as Scripture"). The author challenges the so-called traditio-historical approach of Von Rad and his colleagues. He legitimately asks the question, "How do the concepts of tradition and that of revelation relate?" According to him, revelation is the unfolding of God's purposes and will to man (self-disclosure - "thus says the Lord").

The author makes some very interesting points. For example, interpreting the Old Testament is interpreting written scripture and not traditions behind the texts. Thus Goldingay positively and boldly defends the canon of Scripture. "The canonical writings, then, are those concerning which the

people of God have had sufficient confidence that here God has spoken to declare that they comprise the Scriptures; they are then a norm for evaluating what one finds in other words that have some claim to be the words of God" (p. 145). He critiques the way the Old Testament was interpreted during New Testament times (especially the midrashic approach).

The book touches on some important issues. It is a great challenge to theological students and Bible teachers in Africa today (especially in East Africa) thus it commends itself in the areas of Old Testament Theology and interpretation. Of special significance is the author's unbiased attitude and openness in dealing with those whose views are different from his.

Julius Muthengi, Scott Theological College

Christian Hope and The Future of Man
by S.H. Travis
(I.V.P., Leicester, 1980), pp. 143,£2.85

The concept of cosmic eschatology is very alien to the African mind, according to John Mbiti who observes that "there are no myths of the future in traditional African societies" (**N.T. Eschatology in an African Background**, O.U.P., 1971, p. 56).The modern Western mind fares little better. It is widely assumed that we are living in a causally enclosed universe and besides, the very vastness of the cosmos challenges the credibility of the parousia doctrine. Will Christ come as a space-traveller or as one who moves from a parallel dimension to this one? Perhaps the N.T. term **apokalupsis** (unveiling) implies the latter. Will the "new heaven and a new earth" (Rev. 21:1) include the replacement of the 100,000 million stars of our galaxy, not to mention the millions of other galaxies in the universe? Or will it be a more local affair? Any recent treatment of Biblical eschatology from an evangelical perspective is most welcome, and Stephen Travis has made a creditable contribution in this field.

Christian Hope and the Future of Man is a recent addition to the excellent I.V.P. series, 'Issues in Contemporary Theology' which has I.H. Marshall as its General Editor. Dr. Travis, a lecturer at St. John's College, Nottingham and author of two other books on eschatology (**The Jesus Hope**, I.V.P.; and **I Believe in the Second Coming of Jesus**, Hodder and Stoughton) sets out in this volume to describe and comment upon the debates which have taken place during the last twenty years or so between both theologians and philosophers concerning individual and cosmic eschatology. He first sets the stage by outlining the nineteenth century background with its tendency towards Universalism and its growing pre-occupation with the Kingdom of God issue. We then have a two chapter excursus into the nature, background and significance of Apocalyptic literature, which is followed by a discussion of Pannenberg, Moltmann and Braaten whose insights have been strongly influenced by the Apocalyptic world-view. Travis then turns to the doctrine of the Second Coming and discusses the work of Bultmann, C.H. Dodd and John Robinson, and finally the Heilsgeschichte school of Cullmann and Kümmel whose views best reflect his own. The penultimate chapter is concerned with the question of such issues as mind-body dualism and the intermediate state. Many readers may be shocked to learn that such distinguished theologians as Tillich and Moltmann seem not to believe in any afterlife at all. The book concludes with an evaluation of recent thinking on the Last Judgement, and Heaven and Hell.

As one might expect, the book displays a clearly British perspective. It is significant, for example, that the Millennium debate is only mentioned once

in passing (p. 64), which one might contrast with Hoekema's recent book, **The Bible and the Future** (Eerdmans, 1979) which is written from an American perspective and contains three chapters on the Millennium issue. Travis also dismisses Dispensationalism in a sentence (p. 64). Such British scholars as Dodd and Robinson may be unfamiliar to most African students, although Mbiti inter-acts with both of them in his book on eschatology which, in fact, is based on his Ph.D. thesis, written for Cambridge University, England.

Travis' own views will not please all evangelicals. He ignores the Reformed notion of human freedom and boldly assumes the autonomy of man's moral choices in his discussion on the acceptability of the doctrine of Final Judgement (p. 120). He follows a growing number of scholars (including Hoekema) who reject the idea that the soul is intrinsically immortal (p. 118). More controversially, he seems to represent two slowly growing trends in British evangelical thought: a tentatively hopeful view concerning the fate of the unevangelized (pp, 131-132), shared by e.g. C.S. Lewis and J.N.D. Anderson; and a sympathetic re-evaluation of the notion that Hell is annihilation (p. 135), shared by e.g. J.W. Wenham.

I, myself, would have appreciated a shorter treatment of Apocalyptic and the inclusion of a discussion on the views of other influential theologians like Teilhard de Chardin. On page 23, Travis informs us that Teilhard and Process theologians are excluded because their eschatological views "seem so much part of a larger 'system' that justice could not be done to them in the space available". But it is hard to see how this is any the less true of, for instance, Moltmann. It would seem to me, in any case, that Process eschatology could be dealt with in very little space since most thinkers of this school follow their mentor A.N. Whitehead in assuming that the present universe is everlasting and that the only future for the individual is in the mind of God.

I could quibble over a few of Travis' conclusions. For example, he seems sympathetic with the view that "hell is not a punishment for turning one's back on Christ and choosing the road that leads to destruction. It is where the road goes" (p. 121). But Scripture seems clearly to include the punitive element (e.g. Matt. 25:41). Nevertheless, Travis has done an admirable job. His presentation is clear and comprehensive, and his judgments are fair and balanced. He has a crisp, succinct style which is particularly important in discussing a subject which can so easily become amorphous. This, and every other book in the series, should be bought and read by every serious student of theology.

Robert Cook, Scott Theological College

Commentary on Joshua
by M.H. Woudstra
(Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1981), pp. 396, $16.95

Once in a while one comes across a commentary that catches one's imagination and stands out as more than a good commentary. That Marten Woudstra has done this for a book that is not well served with commentaries is truly remarkable.

Woudstra recognizes that the book is not just history, nor just a character study of the man Joshua, but it is first a record of what God has done. He sees clearly that it is the Living Word of God to man, and that exegesis properly done gives access to what God says. He does not say this just to be categorized as a Conservative Evangelical scholar, but rather there is a consistent emphasis throughout the commentary that the Book of Joshua is the revelation of God's Word to man through what God has done.

Following the format of the New International Commentary of the Old Testament Series there are a number of introductory articles dealing with matters such as title, and purpose, authorship and date, unity, occasion, background and so on. Though these are not overlong (50 pages out of 400) they do cover the ground in adequate detail without burdening the reader with intricate analysis and evaluation of differing critical views. These are well worth reading since, as well as covering much valuable material, they set the tone of the book as a whole.

In an important section on Theology, Woudstra emphasizes that theology is not an appendix to exegesis but is an integral part of it, being concerned with what God says about himself. He points out three major themes that run through the book: The fulfilment of promises made to the forefathers, the not-yet of fulfilment (there is still much to be done), and the faithfulness of God to the covenant. Another major component is the focus on the land with its underlining of the fulfilment of the old covenant promises. He also gives a caution against over-rating the importance of typology.

The Book of Joshua has features which suggest that it was carefully ordered, a number of these are listed in the section on unity of compositon. There is evidence that the author had considerable skill as a writer, particularly in his use of suspense. In order to heighten the drama the narrative frequently uses prolepsis, that is the reader is alerted to something which is later developed in more detail. This aspect of Hebrew narrative technique acounts for what others have supposed to be the weaving together of two different documents.

Woudstra is fully aware that O.T. scholars have strong differences of opinion regarding the book and gives a fair survey of these without compromising his position. Those who wish to follow up critical and textual questions, or historical details of the views of of other scholars are well provided with many adequate footnotes, references and a comprehensive bibliography.

The commentary itself is divided into manageable sections introduced by the author's own translation. In spite of a wealth of material and explanatory details the commentary reads easily, with Woudstra managing to capture the drama of the book, particularly by conveying some of the excitement as the climaxes are reached.

Mention is made of other important themes which recur as the book progresses. These include: failure apart from God, land as inheritance, the importance of obedience to the covenant, parallels between Joshua and Moses showing the continuity of God's work (this is a very interesting insight), an emphasis on the participation of all Israel. Six maps illustrate geographical features, tribal areas and the major campaigns; these are particularly useful.

This is an outstanding evangelical commentary that will greatly enrich our understanding of this very significant part of the Old Testament.

Colin Densham, Moffat College of Bible, Kijabe

The Christian Life: A Doctrinal Introduction
by S.B. Ferguson
(London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1981), pp. 179, **$3.75**

"What do you think about taking doctrine class?" one first year student asks another on the eve of his first course in systematic theology. "I don't know for sure," is the reply, "but I'm praying it doesn't destroy my Christian experience!" If you have ever heard a similar dialogue or prayed similar prayers then perhaps you should read, and really read - slowly, prayerfully, meditatively - Sinclair Ferguson's **The Christian Life**. As J.I. Packer writes in the forward, this is theology that is "fresh and compelling ... applying Bible teaching with insight and wisdom to the condition of plain people" (p. ix). Dr. Ferguson, former pastor in Glasgow, Scotland and currently lecturer in systematic theology at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (United States), is writing to those Christians who want to deepen their experience by providing a "solid foundation upon which experience may be built" (p. xi). Because of his concern for preserving Christian experience, Dr. Ferguson has chosen to write on those doctrines that directly affect the Christian life.

His investigation into the Christian life takes him through eighteen chapters that conform (with a few creative exceptions) to the plan of salvation found in the standard conservative-Protestant theologies. Beginning with a fine chapter on the experiential value of Christian doctrine ("Knowing is For living"). this pastor-theologian lays the groundwork for salvation by surveying sin and its effects (Ch. 2) and "The Plan of Grace" (Ch. 3). The actual dimensions of the past and present Christian experience of salvation are analyzed in chapters four through sixteen as he discusses what it means to be called by God (Ch. 4), convicted of sin (Ch. 5), born again (Ch. 6), express faith and repentance (Ch. 7 and 8) and be justified, adopted, united to Christ and elected (Ch. 9 through 12). Chapters 13 through 15 explore the subject of sanctification while the final three chapters provide skillful discussions of what it means to currently persevere, eventually "sleep in Christ" and ultimately be glorified.

While not agreeing totally with the contents (e.g. his rejection in Ch. 4, following Calvin, that Isaiah 14:12-17 and Ezekiel 28:11-19 refer to Satan) and not satisfied with his clarity of discussion at all points (e.g. his chapter on union with Christ tends to toss out points on the subject without showing tight connections between the various points and how they add up to union with Christ) I would say that his discussion overall is scriptural, practical and readable. Let me note some high points.

Chapter Two - "God's Broken Image" is a competent discussion of sin, essential if one is to appreciate the dimensions of salvation. I greatly appreciated his explanation of what it means to be "born again" (Ch. 6). He focuses on the familiar but immensely rich classical text of the new birth - John 3 - and discourses on the necessity, nature and effects of the Holy Spirit's work of regeneration. This chapter highlights perhaps the outstanding feature of Dr. Ferguson's theological method - clear and careful exposition of Scripture. There is little proof-texting but a great deal of searching and analyzing key passages bearing on a topic. As such, his work deserves to be called a biblical theology in essence though by its topical treatment it is a systematic theology in form. In this sense Ferguson's work is reminiscent of John Murray's **Redemption Accomplished and Applied**, a minor classic that underlies **The Christian Life** in both form, content, and theological method. One, also, should not miss Ferguson's treatment on justification (Ch. 9). African Christianity is subject to Luther's dictum, quoted by Dr. Ferguson, that "this article 'justification by faith' is the head and cornerstone of the church, which alone begets, nourishes, builds and protects the church; without it the church of God cannot subsist one hour" (p. 71).

The most rewarding section of **The Christian Life** is to be found in Chapters 13-15 where sanctification is treated as a continuing process surrounded by two crisis points (p. 118). The first crisis point or decisive event is the radical break with the dominion of sin that takes place at conversion. Romans 6:1-14 strongly reminds us that sanctification cannot be confined to the continuing, progressive overcoming of sin but that there is an immediate release of the Christian from enslavement to sin although the struggle with sin continues. This is not Wesleyan second blessing theology being taught. Instead, the fact is being pointed to that all Christians (not just a spiritual elite) **begin** the sanctification process enjoying the privilege of having sin's dominion (but not presence or punch) broken. Chapters 14 and 15 follow up this account of what John Murray called "definitive sanctification" by outlining the progressive dimension of sanctification, picturing it as a lifelong struggle against the world, the devil and the flesh. Chapter 15 focuses in on the battle with this last mentioned enemy which Dr. Ferguson defines as the "landing strip" in our beings for the powers of the world and the devil. Taking Colossians 3:1-17 as his key passage he explores the biblical dynamics of defeating indwelling sin in a way useful for every Christian eager to make his way along this earthly pilgrimage with surer step and better sense of direction.

Chapter 17 - "Asleep in Christ" - is a creative addition to a book on salvation. It deals with the crucial subject of knowing how to face death. Perhaps African Christians are stronger than their Western counterparts in this area but both groups will benefit from the practical directives remind-

ing us to so die daily in Christ that the eventual appointment with physical death will be "like the singer who has been through his rehearsals, and is perfect in his part, and has but to pour forth the notes once for all and have done." (Spurgeon quoted, (p. 168).

Dr. Ferguson began his survey of the doctrine of salvation with the "conviction that Christian doctrine matters for Christian living" (p. 1). In the opinion of this reviewer he has presented a convincing case for the truth of this conviction. In the course of presenting his case four powerful features of his book impress themselves upon the reader. First, the brand of theology presented is unmistakeably reformed. The constant emphasis of Dr. Ferguson is that we are saved by God's unmerited love and grace in Christ. He rejects the man-centered humanistic thinking that had infected much of contemporary evangelicalism. Throughout the book the Puritan writers of seventeenth century England are a rich mine of theological insight for Dr. Ferguson (who incidentally did his doctoral dissertation at the University of Aberdeen on Puritan John Owen's view of regeneration). From these seventeenth century divines he projects the God-centered theology that dominated the Reformation of Luther and Calvin. The Augustinian theology of grace, which has been the vital force behind the renewal and advance of the church throughout her history, is offered once again as the way to life for contemporary Christianity around the world.

Second, Dr. Ferguson writes with a pastoral tone. There is sensitivity, warmth, charity and wisdom to his theological counsel that will be appreciated by theological students tired of the polemical wranglings that characterize (often out of necessity) so much contemporary theological discourse.

Third, his method is refreshingly scriptural. Unlike those theologians who pay lip service to scripture only to smuggle in their own (or others) human speculations, Dr. Ferguson is relentlessly biblical in his method, displaying his sound exposition of critical doctrinal passages for all to see and evaluate.

Fourth, despite these many strengths, this treatment of salvation has little application beyond the individual. One looks in vain for discussions of the claims of liberation theology and rival world religions. One should supplement Dr. Ferguson's strongly biblical treatment with David Well's **Search For Salvation** (IVP) and Tokunboh Adeyemo's **Salvation In African Tradition** (Evangel). Read in conjunction with these other studies, **The Christian Life** would make a valuable textbook for courses in the doctrine of salvation. For any reader it promises to open up the treasures of biblical salvation and make them gleam again in the contemporary world.

Mark R. Shaw, Scott Theological College

Evangelical Theological Education Today
Paul Bowers, Editor
International Council of Accrediting Agencies for
Evangelical Theological Education, Numbers 1 and 2
(Nairobi: Evangel Publishing House, 1982)

In these first two numbers of a series called **Evangelical Theological Education Today,** the International Council of Accrediting Agencies presents papers read respectively at a consultation on theological education held at Hoddeston, England on March 17-20, 1980 under the auspices of the Theological Commission of the World-Evangelical Fellowship and at a second consultation of the ICAA at Chongoni, Malawi on September 1-4, 1981.

The series has been launched by the ICAA to provide exposure and interchange of ideas covering the whole range of evangelical concerns in theological education. The papers demonstrate that much thinking is going on, that a wide spectrum of ideas is being presented and that a good many of them are still in rather tentative stages of development. It is likely, however, that some constructive dialogue will result and that, in the end, substantial good will emerge. For anyone seriously interested in the cutting edge of reflection on theological education these publications are, and promise to continue to be, valuable sensors to watch on the direction of things to come in this exciting field.

Perhaps at this point a brief re-cap of the development of interest in theological education by evangelicals in recent history might serve to place the content of these papers in perspective - both historically and developmentally as the discussion has moved along.

Over the past ten years theological education has been the object of intense interest and experimentation in the evangelical world. For example, theological education by extention, a decade ago, was just coming to general attention. The insights and reflections stimulated by that movement have blended with other emphases - the doctrine of spiritual gifts, contextualization - to direct new attention to the total challenge of providing suitably equipped leaders for the churches. The problem has been particularly acute and urgent in dynamic and growing third world churches where large numbers of new converts have tended to out-run training programs. The vast TEE activities and production in many parts of the world continue to generate widespread interest and to make substantial contributions to the total task of theological education.

With the passage of years, and after the exaggerated claims and retorts from various sides of the TEE phenomenon, at least in many places things

have settled down to theological education programs that contain both residential and extension modules.

In the middle of the decade under consideration a new thrust in theological education appeared, first in Africa, with the formation of the Accrediting Council for Theological Education in Africa followed in 1980 by the setting up of the ICAA as a coordinating agency for similar regional associations around the world.

The motivation for these developments was concern for educational quality in theological training and the problems of recognition and credibility largely unaddressed by the TEE movement. The accreditation movement has been more comprehensive than the term implies in that the ICAA has been mandated by the Theological Commission of the World Evangelical Fellowship to involve itself with nearly every aspect of theological education and its response to the churches' needs. It is against this general background that the agenda for renewal in number 2 must be understood.

In these first two numbers of the series the wide variety of perspectives and subjects represent the enormity of the field this enterprise is trying to span in a wide diversity of needs and circumstances. A glance at the Table of Contents for the two issues will adequately illustrate this:

Number 1:

1. Evangelical Theological Education in the Changing World of the 1980's, Bruce Nicholls.
2. Opportunities for International Cooperation in Evangelical Education, Bong Ro.
3. Serving the Church in Cultural Context: The Role of Academic Accreditation, Lois Mckinney.
4. An Integrated Approach to Theological Education, Wilson Chow.

Number 2:

1. The Renewal of Evangelical Theological Education, Tokunboh Adeyemo.
2. The Role of Spiritual Development in Theological Education, Bruce Nicholls.
3. Accreditation as a Catalyst for Renewal in Theological Education, Paul Bowers.
4. Contextualization of Theology for Theological Education, Tite Tiénou.
5. Toward a Theology of Theological Education, James Plueddemann.

The dispersion of the writers in key points around the World is indicative of the global perspective on the total task of theological education:

The contributors to Number 1 are: Rev. Bruce Nicholls, Executive Secretary of the Theological Commission of the World Evangelical Fellowship, based in India; Dr. Bong Ro, Executive Secretary of the Asian Theological Association, based in Taiwan; Dr. Lois Mckinney, Executive Director of the Committee to Assist Ministry Education Overseas (CAMEO) in the United States; and Dr. Wilson Chow, Dean of the China Graduate School of Theology in Hong Kong.

The contributors to the second collection are: Dr. Tokunboh Adeyemo, General Secretary of the Associations of Evangelicals of Africa and Madagascar (AEAM) and Chairman of the World Evangelical Fellowship (WEF), from Nigeria and currently residing in Kenya; Dr. Bruce Nicholls, Executive Secretary of the WEF Theologial Commission, with offices in India; Dr. Paul Bowers, General Secretary of the ICAA, based in Kenya; Rev. Tite Tienou, Executive Secretary of the AEAM Theological Commission and Chairman of ACTEA, from Upper Volta; and Dr. Jim Plueddemann, currently Dean of Wheaton Graduate School, and till recently working in Nigeria and a Member of the ACTEA Council.

A number of stubbornly asserted themes that should be encouraging to evangelicals keep surfacing in all the papers. There is a **theological** cast to every article, a conscious determination to attack educational problems from a theological perspective. Complementing this approach is the insistence on a **biblical** base for the whole enterprise of exploring theological education. This does not at all represent an anti-intellectual trend but it does provide a healthy safeguard against faddism in education or social science.

It would seem to this writer that the next item on the evangelical agenda could be the careful working out of definitions of a number of terms being used with reference to theological education. Among these are 'holistic' and 'integrated' and perhaps even a further consideration of the now familiar 'contextualization'. It is important that we know how these words are being used and what they mean in theological education if writers and readers (as well as writers and writers) are going to understand each other.

The agenda for renewal treated in number 2 provides much food for thought as well as a substantive need for delineation of the concept. Its outlines are still unclear; as a construct its usefulness still needs to be demonstrated. Perhaps these are questions for numbers 3 and 4.

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Healing for Damaged Emotions
by D. Seamands
(Victor Books, SP Publications, 1981), pp. 144, N.P.

David Seamands' book is designed to offer help for Christians suffering from emotional problems. The author believes that these problems may not necessarily be solved by ordinary ways of ministry, e.g. prayer, preaching, etc. but require special help. David Seamands is an American pastor with much experience of counselling people with "damaged emotions and unhealed memories" (p. 7). He gives many accounts of people who have been greatly helped by his ministry.

The book is very easy to read; it covers in some detail the problems of low self-esteem, perfectionism, and depression, and suggests ways of dealing with these problems. There is sound Biblical teaching, as well as helpful insights, e.g. "Whenever you experience a response on your part that is way out of proportion to the stimulus, then look out. You have probably tapped into some deeply hidden emotional hurt" (p. 97), and "a person with low self-esteem becomes extremely self-centred" (p.72), "when you devaluate yourself you don't have anything left over to give to others" (p. 54). The author is obviously a very warm and sympathetic counsellor and warns against giving pat answers to those with emotional problems. He also challenges the reader to look realistically into his own life in order to face up to unexpressed anger and hurt.

In spite of its many strong points, the book does not really place sufficient emphasis on the sufferer's own responsibility. The sufferer is generally portrayed as passive and helpless and the emotional problems seem to be inevitable. Seamands does not say this in so many words, but the implication is very strong, due to the frequent use of the term "programmed" which conjures up a vision of a computer, rather than a human being with free will: "if (a child) is programmed for incompetence, he will be incompetent" (p. 64) "false ideas have been programmed into you (p. 74), "people with wrong programming that interferes with their present behaviour" (p. 13), "God's care cannot be felt without a deep, inner re-programming" (p.85). This idea could be very disconcerting for any parents reading the book, since many of the anecdotes are about children of Christian parents. According to the author, these parents are eager to serve the Lord and do their best to raise their children in a godly way; nevertheless, they give their children harmful programming.

Another weakness is that some of the suggestions are far too vague, e.g. those suffering from low self-esteem, who because of "wretched programming" find it "difficult to accept love", are told to "let God love (them)" (p.

75), but there is no indication of how they should go about it. However, the chapters on depression are much better in this respect, and many practical hints are given for dealing with depression, e.g. "(get) enough sleep" (p. 122), "eat properly and regularly" (p. 123), "avoid being alone" (p. 128), "seek help from others" (p. 128), "praise and give thanks ... to the Thessalonians, he didn't say '**feel** thankful for everything', but '**in** everything **give** thanks' 1 Thess. 5:18" (p. 129). In these chapters there is also more emphasis on the sufferer's responsibility, and the importance of forgiveness and facing up to anger: "Unless you learn to deal honestly with those angry roots (of depression), to face your resentment and forgive, you'll be living in a greenhouse where depression is sure to flourish" (p. 125).

Healing for Damaged Emotions is a "lightweight" book and consequently treats the subject matter fairly superficially. Nevertheless, it contains much helpful material and would be a useful addition to the library of anyone involved in a counselling ministry.

Alison Cook, Scott Theological College

Reaching the Arabs: A Felt Need Approach
by T. Matheny
(William Carey Library, 1981)

Tim Matheny's findings, based on concentrated research on Arabs of the Middle East, are much more widely applicable than his title would indicate. The importance of the group as opposed to the individual, the orientation towards people rather than towards time, the emphasis upon hospitality, the despising of manual labour, the centrality of religion in all relationships, and the persistence of underlying animistic beliefs and practices characterize Muslims much more generally than his study would cause one to assume.

Matheny's goal is "the construction of an evangelistic strategy for the Arab world" (p.2) on the basis of research into cultural dynamics. He focuses on the "Transitional Arab", whom he defines as the "Arab who is in the process of modernization" (p.3), since "Transitional Arabs are most receptive to evangelism." (p.3)

The book is divided into two parts. Part One deals with analysis. Here in the first section he discusses cultural themes including hospitality, the family, the function of religion, animistic superstitions, and the concept of time. In his second section, he concentrates attention on the social structure and points out that, as in many other cultures, "The currents of communication ... are not vertical but horizontal." (p.39) This underlines the vital role that kinship relationships play in determining the reaction of Middle East Arabs. Considerable attention is given to the importance of opinion leaders in the society and to their part in producing change.

His analysis is concluded in a third section where he speaks of restrictions to evangelism. Here the typical theological restrictions are discussed, including the Trinity, the deity of Christ, and the crucifixion, along with other hindering factors such as the attitudes of the evangelist, group solidarity among Middle Easterners, and the foreignness of Christianity. Another restriction which is often tragically true of Muslim areas is the failure of churches to welcome converts from Islam.

Part Two is concerned with strategy. He devotes a section to the channels of communication, discussing the innovation-decision process, extending and basic media — the former useful in creating awareness and communicating knowledge, and the latter basic to moving people to decision. He also considers briefly the site where the Christian message may be most effectively communicated.

Another section analyzes the goal of the communicator. Here Matheny distinguishes between Christianization and Westernization. Then he goes on to discuss the means to the success of the evangelist. He states in summary: "The evangelist will be more successful if he properly identifies with the local people, if he makes Christianity relevant to their felt needs, and if he utilizes the proper opinion leaders." (p.109) Considerable attention is given to conversion as a religious rather than a sociological or racial decision, as a multi-individual and not only an individual decision, and in proportion to the degree of knowledge of the message. Also discussed in this section is the nature of the Church as an indigenous and as an ethnic unit. Brief attention is given to some specifics for contextualization.

In his final section on strategy, Matheny turns to the felt needs that provide the title for his book. As he discusses the message, he deals with suiting it to felt needs in order to make it more relevant. He does state that "Christianity cannot satisfy all the felt needs of the people without becoming distorted." (p.138) Recognizing that felt needs may be only a part of the ultimate needs of man, he points out that Christ set the example by ministering to felt needs. He also suggests that failure to meet felt needs may be one of the causes of syncretism. Then he presents a list of the suggested felt needs of Transitional Arabs, admitting that some such needs are in conflict with others so that attention must be given to the more dominant ones. One need he cites is surrender to God's will. "Surrender to God's will is the very essence of Islam and should be incorporated into the Christian message where appropriate." (p.151) The section is concluded with a brief discussion of such things as proverbs, illustrations and parables that will affect the style of the message so that it will be communicated in the most meaningful way.

A list of fourteen intermixed observations and recommendations makes up most of the concluding chapter.

Considering that Matheny's research has been done in the study rather than in the field, he has accomplished a superb piece of work. His bibliography is excellent, and much of his book consists of quotations from his sources. In fact, sometimes I wondered if the man had no ideas of his own. If you have my habit of checking footnotes, this may slow up your reading. Yet it may also inspire you to augment your library with some of his sources, as I have done. His cultural analysis concurs with much that we have found in our contact with Muslims in general and with Arabs in particular. Throughout the work you will find suggestions that are worthy of consideration. One of these is the possibility of group response to reduce the cultural adjustment that commonly follows conversion. Another is the importance of our allowing ourselves to be known by Muslims since they will be won by our lives more frequently than by our words. His stress on a

long-term commitment to Muslim evangelism, and on the learning of the language, is well-placed.

Matheny may be faulted for failing to state the role of the Spirit of God in conversion. It would appear from his writing that conversion is psychological and religious rather than a spiritual change.

His unquestioning acceptance of McGavran's thesis that "The resistance of Arabs to the christian faith does not arise primarily from theological considerations, but social (p. 118) makes the reader wonder if he has fully considered the evidence for theological opposition. His only supporting evidence, also drawn from McGavran, is the Indonesian turning from Islam to Christianity. Doubtless the social opposition to conversion is very strong, but spiritual factors ought not to be discounted.

A question basic to his entire strategy is his premise that the Transitionals ought to be the target for evangelism. Unquestionably they are easier to convert, but is ease of conversion the only consideration? What of the need for permanence in the resulting church when Transitionals are chiefly the educated and unmarried young men?

One final criticism concerns the method of research. Matheny concludes: "This study is restricted by all the limitations of library research, and the proposed evangelistic strategy will have to be tested on the field before its validity can be totally demonstrated. (p. 159) Would it not be better to test the theory in the field before submitting it to the public? Certainly some of us will put some of his ideas to the test, but could not their originator have done so with more determination and conviction? However, perhaps it is the theorists who have the answers, while those who are practically involved in the task are too close to the problem, too involved and too busy to enunciate theirs.

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